



[disabilityprepared.ku.edu](http://disabilityprepared.ku.edu)

*FROM communities like yours . . .*

**Best Practices,  
Cutting Edge  
Information,  
and  
Hot Topics to  
Improve  
Disaster Planning  
and Response  
for People with  
Disabilities**

**T**his new interactive website is a clearinghouse that brings it all together for you to learn from and duplicate: the very best practices to meet the disaster-related needs of people with disabilities.

How it works: People like you submit new information to **[disabilityprepared.ku.edu](http://disabilityprepared.ku.edu)** via the website's forum, Facebook page and Twitter feed.

These best practices are then immediately available to other interested persons to adopt and modify for their own local use.

*TO communities like yours.*



The climate has never been better to make real changes for meeting the needs of vulnerable populations during disasters. Recent events have created new awareness, encouraged the development of additional resources and fostered an environment ripe for problem solving and advocacy. We want to get best practice information into the hands of those who can and will make a difference. But we need your help!

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q. *What is the purpose of the website?*

A. Our purpose is to help others discover what is new and working well so it can be duplicated. Where issues are unresolved, we want to bring people to the table for discussion and creating solutions. We hope to build momentum by using these internet resources to reach out to people across the United States.

### Q. *How can I help?*

A. In so many ways!

- **Be a source of information** by sharing what works, your best practices. Post your flyer, poster, program description, training or plan as a best practice. Share these items and your experiences on the website forum, Facebook or Twitter so others can listen, learn and duplicate.
- **Stoke the fire** by getting to the forefront hot topics that are challenges for people with disabilities before, during and after disasters. What are the issues in accessibility, alerts/warnings, call centers, preparedness, evacuation, registries, shelters, and recovery as related to people with disabilities? What can we explore for solutions?
- **Be a catalyst for change** by sharing what *is not* working. For example, what's the same or gotten worse since 9-11 and Katrina? What is your disaster-related survival story?
- **Get the word out** about the website in a newsletter, email, or posting on your Facebook or Twitter accounts.

### Q. *Who can participate on the website features?*

A. Anyone, especially people interested in lessening

the impact of disasters on vulnerable populations. You might be part of a county emergency management team; a person responsible for preparedness at your office, home, church, or at a community-based organization that serves vulnerable populations; a person or loved one of a person with a disability; or disaster survivor!

### Q. *How can I or my agency participate?*

A. Pick the social medium that works best for you (**website forum, Facebook or Twitter**). You will find links to them on the website's homepage at [disabilityprepared.ku.edu](http://disabilityprepared.ku.edu). Watch for new postings and definitely speak out by participating!

### Q. *Why should I get involved in the forum?*

A. That's where you can discuss specific issues and exchange detailed information. Through the forum, we gather information to review and then post selected material on the website as best practices. But unless you share yours, we don't know what might be a best practice. You can read forum entries without registering, but to post you need to register. Registration is easy and free.

### Q. *What other website developments should we be watching for?*

A. New information will be added on the home page under **best practices**. Also, join us on **scheduled live discussions** on the forum chat feature. These will be on a variety of topics, and we invite you to propose a topic to present for a forum chat discussion.

### Q. *Who administers the site, monitors the social media and makes decisions on what to post as best practices?*

A. The site is created, administered and monitored by staff at the Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the University of Kansas.

# Best Practices Featured on Our Website

We've highlighted some of our own community's best-of-the-best practices on the web page to begin the conversation. We offer these as examples for others to learn about and duplicate.

## Trainings about Preparedness Needs of People with Disabilities

These free web-based courses are offered on

<http://ks.train.org> in Kansas or on your state TRAIN system. They were developed by the

Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the University of Kansas, with support from the Bureau of Public Health Preparedness, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and through grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Hospital Preparedness Program.

**Ready, Willing & Able.** This continuing education course is designed for the public health, hospital, preparedness, and emergency response and disaster relief workforces. It covers disability etiquette, terminology, and communications and assistance techniques for evacuating people with disabilities. *Course #1010882*

**All-Hazards Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities in Seasonal and Pandemic Flu.** This continuing education course provides in-depth coverage about disaster-related risks for people with disabilities; public health threats and their prevalence; historical pandemics; seasonal flu prevention and preparedness; and pandemic planning. *Course #1022607*

**Additional educational resources** can be downloaded for immediate use. These include a 12-page booklet, *The Prepared Lifestyle: How to Plan for Seasonal and Pandemic Flu and Other Emergencies*. It covers 5-step seasonal flu plan checklists; tips for individual and workplace



pandemic planning; checklists for all-hazards stockpile for nonperishable food, emergency supplies, important documents, and supplies for people with disabilities; and service animal/pet preparedness.

## Animal Disaster Preparedness

This page links you to the online training **Animal Emergency Preparedness.**

This hour-long course on <http://ks.train.org> provides information on how to keep service animals and pets safe in both natural and manmade disasters. It is appropriate for a wide audience, from professionals to pet owners. *Course #1025307*



Other resources that are available for immediate download and use include: two model animal response team and emergency animal shelter plans; a pet evacuation grab-and-go-bag checklist; and a service animal/pet disaster preparedness form.

## Vulnerable Populations Preparedness

Our site describes a model not-for-profit called Together Prepared that could be duplicated in any community. The coalition consists of the county health department, emergency management and local agencies that serve vulnerable populations.



Their mission is to minimize the impact of disasters on vulnerable populations by preparing the agencies and the clients they serve. Information was shared

by holding forums and preparedness fairs, creating booklets and a preparedness website, and conducting outreach campaigns.

Regular meetings have increased the quantity and quality of preparedness for these organizations and their clients.

## Disaster Hotline and Information Center

The Together Prepared coalition highlighted above received a grant to develop the first county-wide disaster public information hotline for non-emergency calls during a public health threat, disaster or emergency event that is operated and administered through a local public library.



As described in the guidelines posted on the [disabilityprepared.ku.edu](http://disabilityprepared.ku.edu) website, this hotline and information center provides year-round preparedness information to the public, with a special emphasis on vulnerable populations. The hotline staff also provides preparedness training to agencies serving vulnerable populations.

### Share Your Solutions

We want your flyers, brochures, program descriptions, trainings and plans. You can post them directly on Facebook or Twitter, or begin a discussion on the forum.

### Hot Topics

Share your best practices in these areas:

#### Communication

- Accessible Information
- Alerts/Warnings
- Call Centers

#### Preparedness Plans

- Business
- County/City
- Individual
- Service Animals/Pets
- Training
- Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP)

#### Evacuation

- Registries

#### Shelter

- General
- Medical

#### Recovery

- Universal Design



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